

**Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development****Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)****Grant Recipient: Cook Inlet Tribal Council****Federal Tax ID: 92-0094184****Project Title:****Project Type: New Construction and Land Acquisition**

# Cook Inlet Tribal Council - Dena'ina House Demonstration Education Project

**State Funding Requested: \$3,000,000**  
One-Time Need

**House District: Anchorage Areawide (17-32)****Brief Project Description:**

Dena'ina House is a long-term residential facility designed to address student homelessness and residential transiency which are major barriers to Native student success.

**Funding Plan:****Total Cost of Project: \$6,000,000**

	<u>Funding Secured</u>		<u>Other Pending Requests</u>		<u>Anticipated Future Need</u>	
	Amount	FY	Amount	FY	Amount	FY
Federal Funds					\$2,500,000	FY11
Other Funds					\$500,000	FY11
Total					\$3,000,000	

*Explanation of Other Funds:**Other funds will be organizational funding***Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

Homelessness and residential transiency of Alaska Native students in Anchorage is high, both because of poverty and the instability of families that move to the city from rural villages. Homelessness/transiency is a major contributor to absenteeism, poor school performance, and drop out rates. Dena'ina House is proposed as a cost-effective strategy for providing stable homes for Native students, aged 14 to 18, who are homeless/transient and at high risk for educational failure - a group not adequately served by existing programs. The project will provide long term foster care/educational support for approximately 20-30 residents, linking them with the successful school-within-a-school education program that CITC already provides in the public schools. It will provide home-based tutoring, together with counseling to strengthen self-esteem, and develop values related to responsibility, the value of hard work, resiliency, community service, and respectful relationships.

**Project Timeline:**

Year 1 (site research and procurement; refine and finalize program design)  
Year 2 (architectural planning, construction/renovation; program begins as a pilot)  
Year 3 (full-scale operation begins)

**Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:**

Cook Inlet Tribal Council

**Grant Recipient Contact Information:**

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Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? ☒ Yes ☐ No

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## **Dena'ina House Demonstration Education Project: A Public-Private Partnership to Improve Outcomes for Homeless Native Students in Anchorage**

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For nearly a decade, Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC) has worked in partnership with the Anchorage School District (ASD) to improve the academic performance of Alaska Native and American Indian (AN/AI) students.

Our school-within-a-school model is demonstrating positive results, and is identifying effective approaches to overcoming long-standing educational achievement gaps: in elementary school, CITC programs have resulted in gains in student proficiency, especially in grades K-3; in middle school, CITC students perform better on Standardized Basic Assessment tests; in high school, CITC students achieve higher scores on High School Graduation Qualifying Exams.

**But there is a significant additional challenge that remains to be tackled – the high level of homelessness and family instability among AN/AI students – which has a devastating impact on academic readiness and potential for many of our students.**

**CITC seeks \$3 million in capital funding for *Dena'ina House*, a group home facility designed to address student homelessness and residential transiency, a major barrier to Native student success.**

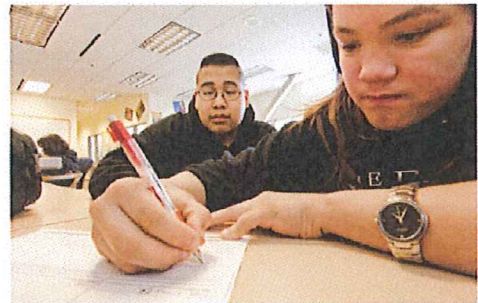
Solving the problem of student homelessness and residential transiency is a critical next step in providing long-term solutions for improving AN/AI student educational performance. Dena'ina House is proposed as a public-private demonstration of a long-term residential project targeting homeless/transient Native students, aged 14 to 18, who are not adequately served by existing programs.

## **The Impact of Student Homelessness and Residential Transiency**

For a variety of reasons – but mainly due to poverty – many AN/AI students in Anchorage lack fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence; instead, they live in shelters, or “couch surf” between the homes of relatives and friends, moving from school to school during the year.

Alaska ranks 10th in the nation in its percentage of homeless people, with Native people disproportionately affected. A recent survey of homeless people at Project Homeless Connect in Anchorage estimated that between 58% to 62% were Alaska Native people.

Homelessness impacts families and young people as well as adult individuals. Each year, Covenant House of Alaska serves nearly 3,000 homeless youth between the ages of 13 to 21, 40% of them are Alaska Native. Student homelessness and transiency within the Anchorage School District is recognized as a serious and growing problem; in 2009, the number of homeless students in the district increased by 38% over the previous year.



Alaska Native students newly arriving in Anchorage from rural villages are especially at risk for family instability, homelessness, and poor academic performance, due to the stresses of cultural and social transition, strained family support structures, transient residences, and changing schools. These students frequently do not have stable homes, and quickly become lost in schools that are often larger than their entire home village. For them, failure at school becomes a likely outcome, with life-long negative impacts for them, and serious consequences for the entire community. A number of national studies demonstrate the social and economic costs:

- Attendance and academic achievement of homeless students is poor, and drop out rates are high. Research indicates that 43% of homeless students repeat a grade, 25% are placed in special education, and 50% are failing academically.
- Nationally, high school dropouts are 3.5 times more likely than high school graduates to be arrested in their lifetime; a one-year increase in average education levels would reduce arrest rates by 11%; 75% of America's state prison inmates are high school dropouts; a 1% increase in high school graduation rates would save approximately \$1.4 billion in incarceration costs.
- According to national studies, dropouts are more likely than high school graduates to be unemployed, in poor health, living in poverty, on public assistance, and single parents with children who also drop out of high school; dropouts were more than twice as likely as high school graduates to slip into poverty in a single year.



## **Dena'ina House: A Demonstration Project to Tackle Student Homelessness**

A comprehensive approach to improving AN/AI student success in Anchorage must include an effective strategy for providing stable homes for Native young people, aged 14 to 18, who are homeless or transient. Dena'ina House is proposed as a public-private demonstration of a long-term project targeting this age group, which is not adequately served by existing programs.

- Dena'ina House will address the unmet, unique needs of AN/AI homeless/transient students aged 14 to 18, by providing both residential stability and educational support for approximately 20 to 30 young people.
- It will link residents with the successful school within-a-school partnership that already exists between CITC and ASD, to provide intensive educational instruction and a path to success. Dena'ina House will also include on-site capability for after school core-content tutoring.
- It will provide a supportive, stable and nurturing environment and counseling for young people who otherwise are highly likely to drop out of school, and have an increased risk of teen pregnancy, lifetime unemployment/under-employment, and greater susceptibility to addictions and crime.
- It will provide students with strong grounding in Alaska Native culture, as a means of nurturing self-esteem, and developing cultural values related to responsibility, the value of hard work, resiliency, community service, and respectful relationships.

***A public-private demonstration project, Dena'ina House will combine resources from CITC, state and federal sources, together with private sector donations and grants.***

***Dena'ina House is a cost-effective approach to a problem that will otherwise pose long-term, far-reaching social and economic costs to the state.***

## **A \$3 Million Funding Request to the State of Alaska**

CITC will leverage the \$3 million capital grant requested from the State of Alaska to secure \$3 million in additional funding from CITC, federal grants, and private sources, for a total project cost of \$6 million. This funding request will enable planning, design, property procurement, and construction/renovation of a suitable facility for Dena'ina House in Anchorage

Dena'ina House is a cost-effective approach to a problem that will otherwise pose long-term, far-reaching social and economic costs to the state.